

MINUTES
Housing Authority of the Town of Darien
November 20, 2008

A Special Meeting of the Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the Town of Darien was called to order at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, November 20, 2008 in Room 119 of the Darien Town Hall.

Present were: Commissioners Jennifer Schwartz, Cynthia Ashburne, Jan Raymond, Joe Warren, Kass Bruno; Executive Director, Kathryn Molgano. Also present were AON Building Committee members Marc Thorne and Tom Bell.

Commissioners were unable to approve past minutes due to the fact that this was a Special Meeting.

Paid Bills Reports for MR36 and E187 for November, 2008 were approved without objection.

The 2009 Meeting Schedule for the Commissioners of the Darien Housing Authority was unanimously approved (motion by Cynthia Ashburne). Kathryn Molgano will request use of Room 119 for these monthly meetings. (Schedule with approved room assignments attached to Minutes)

Executive Director's Report: Kathryn Molgano reported the following:

Audit of Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2008: In-house portion of the 2008 audit was conducted on November 6, 2008 by Patrick Buel, CPA. Audit reports are expected to be received in late December.

Allen-O'Neill Homes: The final Town Leaf Pick-up date is December 1, 2008. AON residents who have not taken advantage of this service will be responsible for removal of leaves from the property at their own expense.

The Winter Parking Ordinance will go into effect on December 15th. DHA will mail notices to all residents to remind them of parking restrictions enforced by the Darien Police Department during the winter months.

Old Town Hall Houses: The Waiting List for E187 will reopen on December 15, 2008 and will remain open until further notice. Application forms have been revised. Applicants from the Waiting List who cannot be reached due to their failure to advise the Housing Authority of address or phone changes will be removed from the Waiting List and will have to reapply if they want to be considered for a unit. Applicants who turn down an available apartment will also be removed from the Waiting List and must reapply if they would like to be considered at a future date for an available unit.

Kathryn Molgano will attend an upcoming seminar on Income Determination Training on November 25th hosted by DECD and CHFA.

Allen-O'Neill Association: Carley Tankoos reported that that AONA meets on the third Thursday of each month and requested that, whenever possible, DHA avoid scheduling public meetings on those dates.

Carley Tankoos inquired about eligibility and relocation plans for existing AON residents. Jennifer Schwartz reported that DHA is unable to address the question of relocation until such time that we have an approved redevelopment plan. At that time, The Housing Education Resource Center will be handling all matters related to relocation. Karen Nigol will be the appointed Relocation Consultant. Eligibility will be dictated by LIHTC program guidelines and State laws. Jennifer Schwartz also stated that DHA has retained two houses on West Avenue that are not included in the current redevelopment plans. Options for these two houses include 1) selling the houses, 2) the two houses would remain under CHFA's Moderate Rental Program, 3) DHA could consider these two properties for home ownership. Joe Warren added that these two

properties may offer possibilities to existing residents who do not meet eligibility requirements for the LIHTC program.

Carley Tankoos asked if and when the Waiting List for Allen-O'Neill Homes would reopen. Jennifer Schwartz stated that the Waiting List for MR36 will not reopen while DHA is considering a redevelopment of the site.

Senior Resident Association: Kathryn Molgano reported that the Senior Resident Association would hold a holiday party for all residents to attend. DHA forwarded monies from Mary Kay rental proceeds for this event.

Redevelopment: Jennifer Schwartz reported that DHA Commissioners had prepared "Frequently Asked Questions Regarding the Allen-O'Neill Redevelopment" (attached). Copies were made available at the meeting.

Commissioners opened the floor to comments and questions from the audience. The following information and responses were provided by DHA Commissioners:

Jennifer Schwartz has been working with Don Fital, Superintendent of Schools and Kim Westcott of the Darien Board of Education to estimate the number of additional students that would result from the AON Redevelopment. The analysis is expected to be completed prior to the November 25th public P&Z hearing.

Jennifer Schwartz stated that HUD guidelines provide the number of persons allowed to reside in proposed units. She also stated that it is unlikely that proposed one bedroom units will house school aged children. Co-Developer Arthur Anderson has stated that one bedroom units will not be rented to families with children. Jan Raymond stated that DHA will have the authority and responsibility to determine if families will be moved to more appropriate sized (larger) units if they have more children.

In response to questions about the intended use of the two West Avenue houses, Jennifer Schwartz clarified that LIHTC's will not provide funding for alteration or renovation of the two West Avenue houses that are not included in the redevelopment plans. Financing would come from other sources.

Jennifer Schwartz and Commissioners disagreed with neighbors' concerns that high density will "open the doors for more developers", pointing out that the AON site is not owned by a private entity and further, the property is restricted as to its use. Jan Raymond stated that this site generates its own income - neither the existing development nor the planned redevelopment relies upon Town taxes for its operating budget.

In response to neighbor's concerns of the financial viability of the proposed project, Jennifer Schwartz provided a list of all completed 9% LIHTC projects in the State of Connecticut from the past five years, including contact information, so that interested persons could research the success of these projects.

In response to neighbors' statements suggesting that DHA has been non-communicative in matters related to the AON Redevelopment, Jennifer Schwartz provided a summary of the Minutes from thirty-one public meetings in which Redevelopment was discussed held by DHA Commissioners since April, 2007.

Jan Raymond responded to Kathy Roger's concerns about the plotting of buildings on Elm Street, reporting that the proposed buildings cannot be moved farther back from the street. As reported to DHA by the Fire Marshall, buildings cannot be set back more than 50 feet.

Objections to proposed sidewalks and lighting were expressed by neighbors. Jennifer Schwartz stated that while she and other Commissioners agree with the stated objections, these items are specified by CHFA and not subject to change by DHA Commissioners. Schwartz encouraged

residents and neighbors to speak to this matter at the upcoming P&Z meeting on November 25, 2008. DHA is amenable to P&Z's recommendations for modifications to lighting and sidewalks.

Commissioners discussed scheduling a Special Meeting on December 10, 2008.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathryn Y. Molgano
Executive Director

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